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# Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Abyei

## I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 27 of Security Council resolution 2287 (2016), in which the Council requested me to continue to inform it of progress in the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) and to bring to its immediate attention any serious violation of the Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on temporary arrangements for the administration and security of the Abyei Area, of 20 June 2011 (S/2011/384, annex). The report provides an update on the situation in Abyei and on the deployment and operations of UNISFA from the issuance of my previous report (S/2016/353) on 15 April 2016 to 14 October 2016. It also presents the progress made in the implementation of additional tasks mandated under Council resolution 2024 (2011) relating to the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism.

## II. Security situation

2. The security situation in the Abyei Area remained unpredictable but generally calm. UNISFA continued to conduct operations to maintain peace and stability. It conducted 16,047 day and night patrols, undertook 2,968 escorts and facilitated 243 joint security committee meetings with community leaders in the Abyei Area.

3. The Government of the Sudan continued to maintain between 120 and 150 oil police personnel inside the Diffra oil complex, in violation of the Agreement of 20 June 2011 and several Security Council resolutions. There were also reports of elements of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) present within the Abyei Area. On 8 May, an armed South Sudanese soldier on leave, who was seen threatening a villager with his rifle in Agok in the southern sector, was disarmed by UNISFA troops and handed over to the Agok community protection committee.

4. As noted in my previous report, the conflict prevention and mitigation strategy adopted by UNISFA for the previous dry season involved the creation of a line of disengagement between the Misseriya and Ngok Dinka communities. The Force's planned and selective relaxing of the line of disengagement enabled Misseriya access to grazing land and water in the southern part of the Abyei Area. It also allowed the Ngok Dinka to return, for the first time since the 2011 conflict, to nine



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villages north of river Kiir. With the onset of the rainy season in June, the reverse migration northward of the Misseriya, comprising about 35,000 people, was largely peaceful, in contrast to the spate of violence that has traditionally characterized the reverse migration.

5. The grazing by Misseriya-owned herds in areas inhabited by Ngok Dinka resulted in some instances of cattle rustling. As part of fostering reconciliation and peaceful coexistence, several instances of the return of rustled cattle by both sides were facilitated by UNISFA. Significant progress was observed in the monitoring of stolen property and livestock by the two communities and in the prompt return of or provision of compensation for stolen property to victims of crime. On 25 April, responding to reports of cattle rustling by unknown persons in the central sector, a Ngok Dinka community leader handed back cattle to a Misseriya community leader in the presence of UNISFA representatives. In a gesture of reciprocation, on 4 May, cattle reported missing by the Ngok Dinka at Noong were recovered and handed over by Misseriya community leaders. Intercommunity cooperation extended to other potentially disruptive criminal incidents: on 28 April, Misseriya community leaders compensated the family of a Ngok Dinka stabbed to death on 1 April at Noong. The victim's stolen motorbike was also returned.

6. Criminality was largely intra-ethnic. On 10 June, a Ngok Dinka man, armed with an AK-47 rifle, attacked three Ngok Dinka community protection committee members for unknown reasons in the general area of Agok, killing two and seriously injuring one. The assailant later killed himself. On 27 April, a Ngok Dinka man shot dead another Ngok Dinka man in Abyei town. Similarly, on 10 May, a Misseriya cattle herder was stabbed to death in a fight with another Misseriya cattle herder, 8 km from Tajalei in the southern sector.

7. In relation to security incidents concerning UNISFA operations, on 3 August, unknown armed persons fired machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades near the UNISFA Tajalei company operating base in the southern sector. UNISFA troops conducted a patrol in the suspected area and recovered two expended rockets, nine live rounds and 23 fired cartridges.

8. There was a relative decrease in the number of thefts and break-ins inside the UNISFA compound, as well as the United Nations common premises compound occupied by personnel of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. Whereas during the previous reporting period there were 22 break-ins and thefts, during the current reporting period there were only 9 such incidents; the construction of hard-walled perimeter fencing contributed to the improvement. The break-ins were perpetrated by young people from Abyei and neighbouring areas.

9. Given that the establishment of the Abyei Police Service remained a challenge, the UNISFA police component continued its efforts to support the maintenance of law and order through community-based interactive patrols. UNISFA police conducted 271 independent and joint security observation and community interactive patrols, covering a total distance of 5,852 km. The UNISFA police component continued capacity-building of community protection committees in accordance with paragraph 16 of Security Council resolution 2287 (2016). Co-locating with community protection committees, UNISFA police provided training on managing law and order situations and performing administrative

functions. The establishment of community protection committees in northern Abyei continued to be delayed owing to the reservations of the Government of the Sudan about the concept.

10. The police component attended joint security meetings along with military and community stakeholders in the central and northern sectors, sharing community policing techniques and promoting safer neighbourhoods as a way to protect civilians. The UNISFA police gender cell, in collaboration with the UNISFA training and development cell, conducted induction training sessions covering sexual and gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, gender equality and gender mainstreaming. UNISFA police conducted crime prevention campaigns on safety.

11. In line with the UNISFA mandate to confiscate and destroy weapons, UNISFA military and police and personnel of the Mine Action Service of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations destroyed 13 AK-47 rifles and more than 6,000 rounds of small arms ammunition at the UNISFA weapons and ammunition management facility at Dokura in the central sector. Four anti-personnel mines, three of which were in the vicinity of the common market at Noong, were cleared after reports by community members. During the reporting period, 90 km of priority routes were verified as safe from explosive hazards. The routes included those used by company operating bases for robust area patrolling. Three routes within the Abyei Area remained unassessed for explosive hazards at the end of the reporting period.

12. Non-technical survey and mine risk education activities in various communities led to the identification and destruction of 77 items of explosive remnants of war. The Abyei camp expansion site, comprising 540,000 $m^2$, was deemed safe from explosive hazards. Mine risk education messages were delivered to 461 UNISFA civilian personnel, military observers and military and United Nations agency personnel. Mine awareness messages were also delivered to more than 18,600 people, including nomadic herdsmen and returnees.

13. As part of its conflict prevention and mitigation strategy, UNISFA upgraded its deployment at Goli and Marial Achak, in the northern and southern sectors, respectively, to permanent company operating bases. In June, the Government of the Sudan lifted the restriction on deliveries of construction material into the Abyei Area, enabling the Force to start work on the Abyei camp expansion and resume work on improving mission infrastructure.

## III. Intercommunal dialogue

14. UNISFA continued its engagement with both communities on enhancing intercommunity dialogue with the aim of promoting reconciliation. To that end, the central theme was the promotion of the common market, which had been set up at Noong in the central sector in mid-March. With the onset of the rainy season, the common market was moved to Amiet owing to concerns that Noong would not be accessible to vehicles carrying goods and passengers during the rainy season. The market started functioning from its new location on 14 June, with most activities focused on the erection of stalls and shelters.

15. With regard to both common markets at Noong and Amiet, UNISFA provided perimeter and area security, and joint peace committees were established to manage marketplace activities. UNISFA representatives attended the weekly joint peace committee meetings as an observer. UNISFA also carried out several confiscations of weapons in the market and its environs. On 3 May, a UNISFA patrol arrested two Misseriya men with three AK-47s and assorted ammunition in the Nynchor area in the central sector and handed them over to the community leaders in Diffra for prosecution. On 8 May, UNISFA troops disarmed a Misseriya and a Ngok Dinka man found with an old rifle and a hand grenade, respectively, at the Noong common market.

16. Several major security incidents occurred in and around the marketplaces. On 4 May, a Ngok Dinka man was killed and his motorcycle was stolen by unknown assailants while on his way from the Noong common market to Abyei in the central sector. On 7 June, two unknown assailants on a motorcycle shot and killed two men and seriously wounded another when they fired at a vehicle moving from Noong towards Abyei. On 21 June, in the general area of Kolom in the central sector, unknown assailants armed with automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenades opened fire on a commercial pickup vehicle transporting traders from Twic County in Warrap State, South Sudan, to the common market at Noong. The attack left three people dead and two seriously wounded. In an exchange of fire with a UNISFA patrol responding to the incident, the assailants escaped in the victims' vehicle. UNISFA later recovered the vehicle and arrested two suspects. After preliminary investigations, on 26 June the suspects were handed over to Sudanese national monitors. On the night of 29 June, at the site of the new location of the common market at Amiet, unknown armed men attacked Dinka traders from Twic County, resulting in two deaths and two serious injuries. The armed men made away with some of their wares and 116,500 South Sudanese pounds. Reportedly, there was an altercation regarding a commercial transaction between the victims and some Misseriya traders earlier in the day.

17. As a result of those security incidents, on 30 June UNISFA held a meeting with the Ngok Dinka traditional leaders to discuss ways and means to find lasting solutions to the recent trend of attacks at the marketplace. An agreement was reached to suspend market activities until a joint meeting between both communities was held to control and manage various security and administrative aspects of running the joint market. The temporary suspension of the common market had an impact on the humanitarian and recovery situation in the Abyei Area, as well as in the neighbouring areas in South Sudan, as trading activity was paused to allow for security mechanisms to be put in place prior to the resumption of the common market.

18. In order to promote a shared sense of ownership by both communities of the common market, UNISFA facilitated joint peace committee meetings between the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya at Todach in the central sector on 21 and 28 July. UNISFA also facilitated an intercommunity traditional leaders' meeting at Todach on 4 August. The traditional chiefs of both sides agreed to resume the common market at Amiet, as a temporary location, until 31 December. The agreement also affirmed their commitment to peaceful coexistence, payment of compensation for past cases of criminality and measures to end the insecurity surrounding the

common market by establishing a joint traditional court. On 10 August, UNISFA facilitated a follow-up meeting of the joint peace committee at Amiet to work out the modalities, resulting in a written agreement to formally reopen the common market there on 15 August. Humanitarian partners, and UNISFA, supported the common market with water and sanitation facilities. UNISFA supported the two communities in setting up a joint market security mechanism and the aforementioned joint traditional court to maintain law and order in the common market.

19. Security incidents continued, however. On 24 August, unidentified robbers carrying AK-47 assault rifles robbed six Ngok Dinka persons in a vehicle near Dokura in the central sector. On 8 September, three unknown armed robbers shot and killed one female Misseriya trader and seriously wounded another person travelling in a vehicle north of Todach in the northern sector. On 22 September, the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya peace committees held a meeting at the Amiet market to discuss "blood money" payable to the Misseriya for the killing of a Misseriya woman and emphasized the importance and expediency of payment to bereaved families on either side in an effort to lessen any impetus for revenge and resulting insecurity.

## IV. Political developments

20. Meetings of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee have not been held since March 2015. A meeting that had been scheduled for May 2016 in Addis Ababa was not held, following a request for postponement from South Sudan pending internal discussions within its Government. However, a delegation from the South Sudanese Committee, which had not visited Abyei for more than a year, arrived in UNISFA for a three-day official visit from 30 August to 1 September. The delegation was briefed on the current security and political situation, the resettlement patterns in northern Abyei, the status of returnees, the common market, quick impact projects and the development work performed by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.

21. The same week, on 4 September, the Acting Head of Mission/Force Commander met in Khartoum with the officials of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee from the Sudan. He was assured of their support for local-level peace processes and their interest in the renewal of the Committee meetings. UNISFA hopes that such interactions will stimulate and promote a positive engagement in both capitals on matters of common concern and provide the much-needed impetus to hold the next Committee meeting in the near future.

## V. Humanitarian and recovery situation

22. The difficult economic situation, population movements, intercommunal tension and limited or absent basic public services continued to result in humanitarian and recovery needs in the Abyei Area. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, along with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), continued to provide humanitarian and recovery assistance to 139,000 vulnerable people in the

Abyei Area, including 35,000 seasonal migrants who entered the area in October 2015 and left in June 2016. The delivery of humanitarian and recovery assistance was occasionally interrupted by difficult road conditions caused by heavy rains.

23. Despite logistical challenges in South Sudan, about 95 per cent of the planned food requirements were pre-positioned in various warehouses in the Abyei Area. About 6,800 people displaced from Unity State in South Sudan benefited from general food distribution at the Majak Deng Kaia and Magar displaced persons sites. As part of the food-for-assets programme, about 1,600 ha of land were planted with sorghum and vegetables and 69,000 people benefited from monthly food distributions. Efforts to support community livelihoods through vocational training and income generation benefited the Misseriya community. In addition, 53,000 Misseriya livestock received vaccinations before leaving the Area in May 2016.

24. Integrated health-care and nutrition services continued in all the 13 health facilities and mobile clinics throughout the Abyei Area, including measles vaccination and provision of essential drugs. Partners pre-positioned medical supplies for the rainy season in two clinics in northern Abyei and the Abyei civil hospital for southern Abyei. Nutrition screening and programming support for moderate and acute malnutrition patients continued under a targeted supplementary feeding programme in central and southern Abyei. Other key activities included capacity-building of clinical staff; training of community health and nutrition promoters; distribution of hygiene kits and mosquito nets; and campaigns on blood donation and malnutrition throughout the Abyei Area.

25. Kits of education materials were distributed at 20 schools in the central, northern and southern Abyei Area. The food-for-education programme supported 16,689 schoolchildren with meals, and, as a form of attendance incentive, 3,163 girls were provided with take-home rations in 20 schools in southern and central Abyei. Furthermore, the programme carried out a deworming exercise for 12,000 schoolchildren in 20 schools. Two primary schools in the Noong and Marial Achak returnee villages were rehabilitated. Child protection concerns continued to be monitored through the local social welfare department, and a drop-in centre was constructed in Agok to support the reunification of unaccompanied children with their families. South Sudanese people fleeing conflict who transited through Abyei to various destinations in the Sudan were predominantly women and children. With weak child protection mechanisms within Abyei, children were exposed to risks of violence, exploitation and abuse during the migration.

26. With regard to safe water supply, six new water boreholes were drilled and 29 hand pumps repaired, benefiting at least 35,000 people. Hygiene and joint clean-up campaign and sanitation activities with the participation of community members continued in the northern and southern villages. Other major activities included the training of water user committees and local authority counterparts in water management and maintenance of solar-powered water yards. However, with a limited law enforcement system, vandalism and theft of solar systems was rampant and continued to be a challenge.

27. Restrictions imposed by the Government of the Sudan on non-governmental organizations limited the implementation capacity of humanitarian and development actors, especially in the northern parts of Abyei. Additional challenges included lack

of adequate funds, high implementation costs owing to security and logistical constraints, delays in the issuance of travel permits and restrictions on the movement of personnel and supplies by the Government of the Sudan.

28. The conflict in South Sudan also affected humanitarian operations in Abyei, including through the temporary relocation of international staff reporting to Juba; the looting of and high prices for supplies procured in South Sudan; and delays in NGO activities supported by South Sudan offices, particularly those based in Agok. At the end of June and in July, UNISFA monitored the movement northward through the Abyei Area of displaced South Sudanese and Sudanese, most of whom were escaping instability in the area of Wau in Western Bahr el-Ghazal, in South Sudan. Some 1,000 displaced South Sudanese have transited through the Abyei Area towards the Sudan. On 12 August, more than 180 displaced persons from various parts of South Sudan were seen around Dari, near Diffra in the northern sector, making their way towards Sudan. UNISFA and United Nations agencies, funds and programmes provided support for the transiting displaced people.

## VI. Status of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism

29. On 5 June, UNISFA attended the ordinary meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism in Khartoum. Participants discussed, inter alia, the implementation of the Cooperation Agreement between the Republic of the Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan of 27 September 2012, as well as joint security matters. The respective Co-Chairs, reaffirming their commitment to the Cooperation Agreement, called for renewed collective efforts and for developing clear implementation matrices with appropriate timelines for the implementation of the Agreement.

30. During the meeting, UNISFA reiterated the challenges faced, appealing for support for the establishment of a notification system of 48 hours' advance notice for aerial patrols and 24 hours for ground patrols. Both parties agreed on the reactivation of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism plans to reach full operational capability with the operationalization of the additional sectors in Buram and Malakal, within a period of three months. They also agreed to establish two team sites each in sector 1 (Gok Machar) and sector 2 (Kadugli). UNISFA emphasized that no infrastructural projects were being planned for the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism beyond initial operational capability, unless progress was made by both parties on the implementation of an agreement on security arrangements. The parties also agreed that the 10 border-crossing corridors would be opened in two phases, with the operationalization of the first phase involving four such sites. On 21 August, the Ministers of Defence of the Sudan and South Sudan met in Khartoum, on the margins of the visit to the Sudan by the First Vice-President of South Sudan, Taban Deng Gai. At the meeting, outstanding security issues arising from the Joint Political and Security Mechanism meeting of 5 June were discussed. In that connection, UNISFA had yet to receive confirmation of compliance by both sides with the commitments made on 5 June, including on the withdrawal of all forces from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone and support for the Joint Political and Security Mechanism. Furthermore, approval

of ground patrols by the Joint Political and Security Mechanism remained pending, including one patrol to the Tishwin area, where an aerial monitoring mission observed the presence of armed vehicles and a military camp under construction on 8 February 2016.

31. The Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism continued to face significant challenges in the implementation of its aerial verification and monitoring mandate. The vast majority of patrols were not conducted owing to the unavailability of aircraft for technical reasons, unfavourable weather conditions or denial of landing permission by the Government of South Sudan, in violation of Security Council resolutions 1990 (2011) and 2024 (2011) and the status-of-forces agreement signed in 2012. The restrictions imposed by the SPLA division in Aweil, Western Bahr el-Ghazal, remained in place, hampering coverage of the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone towards the western side of the Abyei Area. Of the 42 planned missions, only 7 were carried out, all of them in the eastern side. To date, the Mechanism has been able to conduct only 80 of the 213 planned aerial monitoring patrols. The aerial patrol missions budgeted for in 2015/16 recorded an increase of 7 per cent compared with the previous fiscal year.

32. The Mine Action Service patrol support teams remained ready to deploy in support of the Mechanism's ground patrols at both sector headquarters in Kadugli, in the Sudan, and in Gok Machar, in South Sudan. In addition, the Mine Action Service delivered integrated ground patrol training for 87 national monitors, international military observers and elements of the Ethiopian force protection unit.

## VII. Mission support

33. During the reporting period, the UNISFA military component stood at 4,527 (233 military observers/staff officers and 4,294 troops) against an authorized strength of 5,326. The UNISFA police component stood at 8 police officers against an authorized strength of 50, including 3 women, from three police-contributing countries. The Government of the Sudan has delayed renewal visas for incumbent police officers and refused to issue visas for newly recruited police and corrections personnel since April 2015, affecting the police component's operational capacity to implement its mandated tasks. The total number of civilian staff stood at 237. The Government of the Sudan issued 72 visas for UNISFA personnel, while visas for 14 staff members, 30 military personnel, 32 contactors, 63 Mine Action Service personnel and 2 visitors remained pending. As at 1 September, the Mission had completed the rotation of 1,055 troops through Kadugli airport, conducting 130 rotary-wing round-trip airlifts.

## VIII. Financial aspects

34. The General Assembly, by its resolution 70/269, appropriated the amount of $268.6 million for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017. As at 6 October 2016, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNISFA amounted to $23.9 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to

$2,339.1 million. Reimbursement of troop costs has been made for the period up to 31 July 2016, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has been made for the period up to 30 June 2016, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

## IX. Observations and recommendations

35. The promise of a renewed commitment by the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan to the operationalization of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism was clearly discernible at the ordinary meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism in Khartoum on 5 June and the meeting of the two Ministers of Defence on 21 August. However, the ordinary meeting of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism scheduled for 8 August in Juba was not held. I call upon both parties to maintain the momentum and the constructive spirit of their meeting of 5 June and to realize their commitments.

36. The expressed intention of both sides to submit a report to UNISFA and to the African Union High-level Implementation Panel on the completion of the redeployment of forces from the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone has yet to materialize. With the onset of the dry season, it is essential for both Governments to follow through on the commitments that they have made within the framework of the Joint Political and Security Mechanism to fully operationalize the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism and to facilitate the conduct of its monitoring and verification missions. I would recommend that further investment in the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism strictly correspond to the levels of commitment demonstrated by the two Governments in implementing their agreements.

37. I urge the parties to convene regular meetings of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, which has not met since March 2015, to advance the implementation of the Agreement of 20 June 2011. This is long overdue and a necessary initial step in taking forward the intention of the two Governments on joint administration and policing in Abyei while an agreement on Abyei's final status is pending.

38. I request the Sudan and South Sudan to ensure the full and permanent withdrawal of all unauthorized forces from the Abyei Area and to provide security through the creation of the Abyei Police Service. I urge the Government of the Sudan to arrive at alternative oil security arrangements as a substitute for the armed Sudanese police personnel in the Diffra oil complex. I also call upon South Sudan to prevent access to the Abyei Area by armed elements.

39. Within the Abyei Area, I continue to be encouraged by the initiative of the Ngok Dinka and Misseriya communities to hold joint peace committee meetings, and I commend UNISFA for its role in facilitating them. The constructive spirit of those meetings has enabled peaceful reverse migration, capping a relatively peaceful migration season, which witnessed the sharing of pastures and compensation to victims for criminal activities. The increased self-regulation by both communities has helped to minimize disruptive activities violating the peace. The endorsement of the peace committees' work by the traditional chiefs of both sides has built sustainability into local-level peace initiatives. I encourage the two Governments to

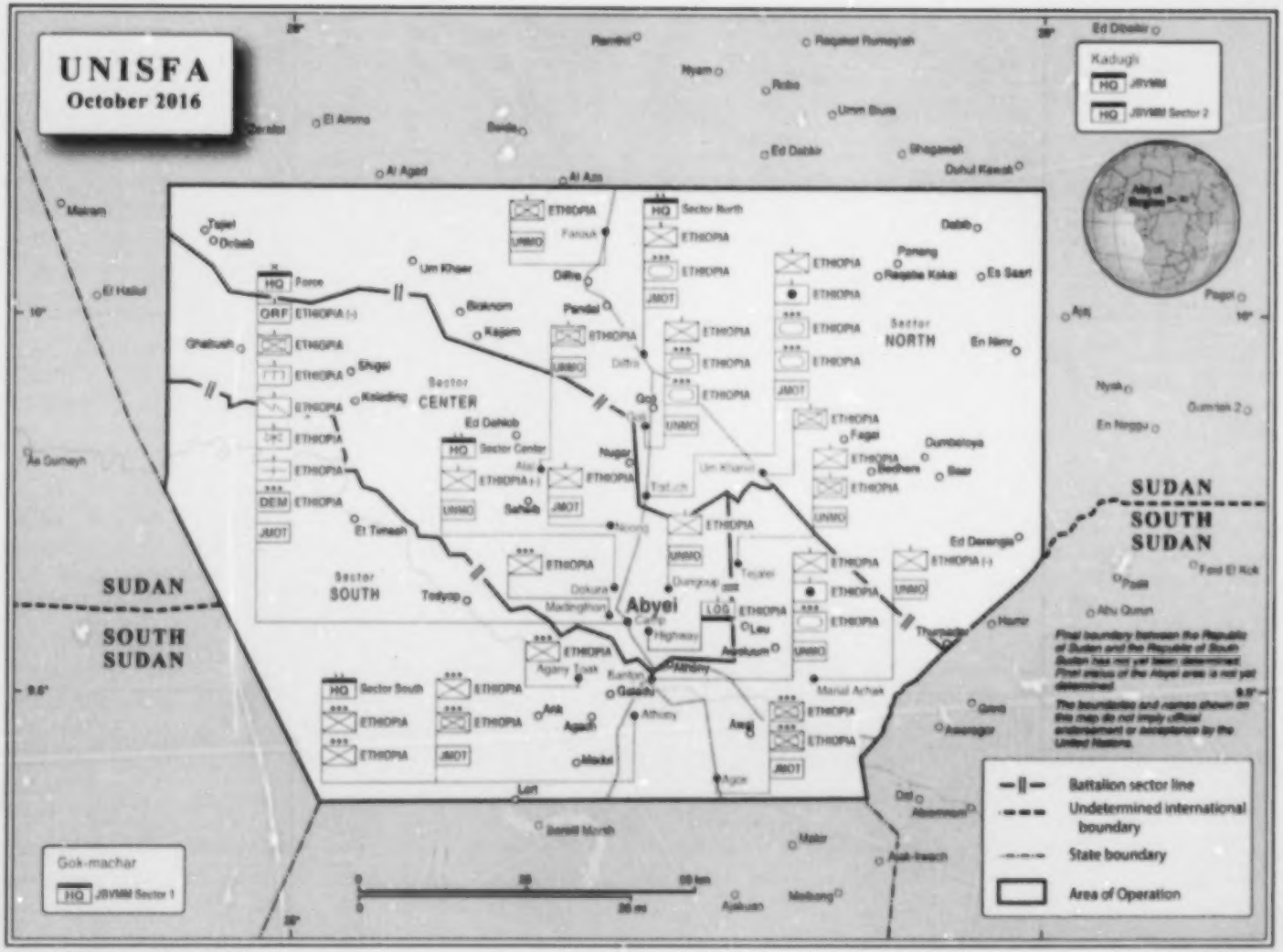
transform those peace initiatives into a viable political process, through the creation of the joint entities envisaged in the Agreement of June 2011.

40. The most visible symbol of the commitment of both communities to reconciliation is the resumption of trading activities at Amiet in the central sector. The common market is a result of sustained UNISFA engagement with the two peace committees at the grass-roots level and has contributed to increasing the accessibility and affordability of commodities in the area. Although the security surrounding the common market was marred by some incidents, the reopening of the common market after a month and a half of temporary suspension is an encouraging indicator of the resilience of the grass-roots peace process. I call upon both sides to maintain that spirit of cooperation when deciding on the future permanent location of the common market.

41. I once again call upon the Sudanese authorities to improve their support to UNISFA. Timely issuance of visas to UNISFA personnel is critical to the mission's effectiveness. In particular, I would like to highlight, with grave concern, that the police component is unable to operate effectively at the current level of police personnel. From April 2015 to late September 2016, the Government of the Sudan did not grant any visa requests for the deployment of new police officers to UNISFA, resulting in UNISFA being unable to replace those who have concluded their tours of duty. This clearly undermined the UNISFA police component, which has played a key role in intercommunal dialogue and upholding the rule of law in the absence of the Abyei Police Service. In this respect, I welcome the fact that, on 6 October, the Government issued 14 entry visas and travel permits for the UNISFA police component.

42. I am encouraged by the significant progress that the two communities have made on issues affecting their people and on reconciliation. Yet much remains to be done to ensure the smooth implementation of the provisions of the Agreements of 20 June 2011 and 27 September 2012 on security arrangements. I therefore recommend the extension of the mandate of UNISFA for another six months to help both Governments to make progress towards the goals that they had set for themselves in those Agreements.

43. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation for the efforts of my Acting Head of Mission/Force Commander, Major General Hassen Ebrahim Mussa, and all United Nations staff, including staff of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, for their perseverance under challenging circumstances. I also wish to express my gratitude to my former Special Envoy, Haile Menkerios, and my newly appointed Special Envoy, Nicholas Haysom, for taking the political process forward. Finally, I thank the former President of South Africa and Chair of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, Thabo Mbeki; the African Union Commission; the Peace and Security Council of the African Union; and the Government of Ethiopia for their continued support and commitment to the search for peace in the Abyei Area.

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